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PRIORITY

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DE RUMJPG #2156 2940055

P 200930Z OCT 76

FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6326

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY 3890

AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 1890

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE PRIORITY 180

AMEMBASSY GOMN PRIORITY 63

AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 25

S E C R E T PEKING 2156

EXDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, CH, UR, EK

SUBJECT: RUMORS OF CHINESE SLIGHT THAWING TOWARD SOVIET BLOC

1. IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE PURGE OF PEKING'S RADICAL QUARTET, CHINESE MEDIA AND CHINESE OFFICIALS--AT LEAST IN CONVERSATIONS WITH WESTERNERS--HAVE ALLOWED FOR NO POSSIBILITY OF IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. DENUNCIATIONS OF SOVIET MACHINATIONS HAVE INCREASED IN STRIDENCY, AND REFERENCES TO THE "SHAM" NATURE OF SOVIET-STYLE COMMUNISM HAVE BECOME A STANDARD PART OF THE OFFICIAL CHINESE TOUR D'HORIZON FOR FOREIGN VISITORS.

2. BUT RUMORS HAVE BEGUN TO BE HEARD IN PEKING'S DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY THAT THIS IS A FACADE, THAT CHINA'S NEW LEADERSHIP MAY IN FACT OPT FOR BETTER RELATIONS WITH SOVIET BLOC COUNTRIES. A JAPANESE EMBOFF (PROTECT) WAS ADVISED BY AN EASTERN BLOC COLLEAGUE, IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE, THAT MFA VICE FOMIN YU CHAN HAD PRIVATELY TOLD THE EAST GERMAN AMBASSADOR AROUND OCTOBER 11-12 THAT "PRC-USSR RELATIONS WILL BE RESTORED IN TIME ALTHOUGH CONDITIONS ARE NOT YET RIPE." THE JAPANESE EMBOFF'S INFORMANT INSISTS THAT YU DID NOT SPECIFY THAT HE MEANT STATE-TO-STATE RELATIONS, THOUGH HE WOULD JUDGE

* * * * * WWSH COMMENT * * * * *

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THAT IS WHAT HE DID MEAN.

3. AN EAST GERMAN EMBOFF MADE NO MENTION OF SUCH A MEETING IN AN OCTOBER 28 DISCUSSION WITH USLO OFFICER, BUT HE VOLUNTEERED THAT HIS COUNTRY WAS "OPTIMISTIC" ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH CHINA. REFERRING VAGUELY TO "RECENT" CONVERSATIONS WITH CHINESE OFFICIALS, HE SAID THAT THE CHINESE EVIDENCE AN "UNDERSTANDING OF THE OBJECTIVE NEED" FOR A BETTER RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPE.

4. THE SAME JAPANESE EMBOFF (PROTECT) ALSO ADVISED USLO OFFICER OF A "DISTURBING" CONVERSATION HE HAD HAD WITH A SOVIET EMBOFF, WHO ON OCTOBER 3 HAD "ACCURATELY PREDICTED" THAT HUA KUD-FENG WOULD SOON BE FORCED TO MOVE AGAINST THE RADICALS AND THAT YAO WEN-YUAN AT MINIMUM WOULD FALL. EVEN THOUGH THE SOVIET EMBOFF HAD PRESENTED HIS CONCLUSION AS AN ANALYTICAL JUDGMENT BASED ON INTENSIFYING MEDIA POLEMICS (HE CITED THE SEPTEMBER 59 ARTICLE IN PEOPLE'S DAILY BY TSINGHUA UNIVERSITY AUTHORS), HIS AIR OF EXTREME CONFIDENCE LED THE JAPANESE EMBOFF TO WONDER, ESPECIALLY IN RETROSPECT, IF THE SOVIETS MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN TIPPED OFF IN SOME FASHION BY THE CHINESE.

5. ADDRESSEES WILL HAVE NOTED NCNA REPORT THAT YU CHAN ON OCTOBER 8 MET AND HAD A "FRIENDLY TALK" WITH GERD RUGE, RESIDENT CORRESPONDENT OF DIE WELT. ACCORDING TO RUGE, YU CHAN RATHER FORCEFULLY QUESTIONED THE RELIABILITY OF THE U.S. RUGE, WHO HAS SINCE LEFT PEKING FOR A YEAR AT HARVARD, WAS SURPRISED THAT CHINESE PUBLICIZED THIS MEETING SINCE IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE CONFIDENTIAL AND ON A DEEP BACKGROUND OR GUIDANCE BASIS. IT WAS RUGE'S PLAN TO WRITE A STORY ON CHINESE VIEWS WHICH WOULD IN FACT BE THOSE EXPRESSED BY YU CHAN (WE DO NOT KNOW IF THIS STORY HAS APPEARED IN GERMAN OR U.S. PAPERS).

6. AUSTRALIANS TELL US THAT SOVIET EMBOFFS ARE GOING AROUND THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY CLAIMING THAT THEY HAVE FOUND A SUDDEN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF CHINESE PROUD OF THEIR ABILITY TO SPEAK RUSSIAN WELL.
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